Meditations and Hymns.

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MEDITATIONS AND HYMNS.

DYING GRACE.

When from disease or weariness,
I know not which, weak, in distress,
I on my couch am laid,
How sweet it is, while waiting there,
Released from all disturbing care,
To feel my peace is made!

I seem escaped from earthly things,
Loosed by that Spirit's power, who brings
  The suppliant near the Throne;
While sins that threatened me before,
Now, silenced, terrify no more,
  And naught but love is known.

The dark clouds that I feared might lower
And fill with gloom my final hour,
  Have from this spot passed by;
Lo! where I forward looked with dread,
I, now, midst fruits and flowers am led
  Beneath a cloudless sky!

'Tis not by process of the mind,
By thought, by argument I find,
  From all fear this release;
But as the showers do silent fall
Where they are sent, without my call
  Comes down this perfect peace.

Oft have I wrestled in my day,
When strength was mine, and all my way
  Seemed strewed with hindrances,
And oft my cup seemed running o'er
With answers given, but ne'er before
  Found I such peace as this!

In perfect weakness, when I feel
No earthly balm my wounds could heal,
  And none from Heaven be sought,
Then all my bruises are made whole,
While to my drooping, fainting soul,
  Cordials of joy are brought.

Ah! 'tis not yet my time to die,
This hour of languor shall pass by,
  'Tis but of toil my pain!
When these tired limbs their couch have pressed,
I rising soon, refreshed by rest,
  Will seek my task again.

But, never more, will I forget
The Saviour I this day have met
In Love-Divine's embrace;
When fears of death assert their power,
I'll answer, With the dying hour
He will bring Dying Grace!

THE ONE THING WITHHELD.

Though I be useful where my lot is cast,
Serving my Lord in many humbling ways,
Though of his pardoning mercy made to taste,
And by his Spirit taught to offer praise—

Though I am one of Christ's, and born anew,
Yea, and have sweet assurance in my heart
That I am numbered with the chosen few
Who, from his fold, shall never more depart:

Yet, if there be one bend in all the road,
One hill or vale by which he leadeth me,
Where I would murmur, or cast down my load,
I still am far from what I ought to be.

If but one pain unwillingly I bear,
If but one service hard I him deny,
If aught in life to trust with him I fear,
If there be one way I refuse to die;

By just so much, my heart perverse and blind,
The fulness of its portion fails to see;
While in his whole will one defect I find,
I still am far from what I ought to be.

I may receive of heavenly support,
Good works may grow and prosper in my hand,
And if but Christ's, however I come short,
His grace shall bring me to the Promised Land.

But here on earth, my soul shall never know
What might have been its untold happiness;
Slighting my privilege I still shall go,
My service and my recompense, both less.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SONG IN HUMILIATION.

That does me good which humbles me,
And when I am abased most,
More have I, than if heir to all
The empty honors Earth can boast.

'Tis not the pleasantest estate,
Far hidden in the vale below;
Yet thither, from the hills around,
Enriching streams make haste to flow.

And surely it doth comfort yield,
  Amid dishonor, loss or shame,
To think—Now in the very place
  Where blessings most abound I am!

When bowed beneath some heavy cross
  I toiling go, or while I bear
The lesser humblings of each hour,
  This makes their frowning presence fair.

LOVE.

When on the heart we look, to find
  Whose cherished image it doth wear,
We learn that not the loftiest mind
  Doth grave its name most deeply there,
But the forgiving, true and kind;
  And knowing this, and that above
All offerings that can rendered be
  To us, we most desire love,
It hath a marvel been to me

That Gentleness and Charity
We strive not harder to attain,
Though for ourselves, alone, the gain!
Doth not a hasty spirit fling
That one first drop of bitterness
Into Love's pure and healing spring,
That else would flow forth but to bless?
Or like an unquenched spark it lies,
Even 'midst the gathered bonds of home,
It fires, it snaps the tender ties
That should bind brethren into one.

Oh, for that calm and equal mind
Whose peace a breath may not disturb,
Who, where the soil seems all unkind,
Some hidden virtue still will find,
And its own enmity doth curb.
Few spots of earth have fruitless proved,
When patient hands have come to till;

Few hearts but some have justly loved,
  Few but we may love if we will.
Are any pure? Hath Love a law
  By which unmingled, spotless worth
Alone may claim regard from her?
  Then may she turn, to-day, from earth!

The trait to love, must oft be sought
  Like veins in treasure-yielding ground;
If the bare surface holds it not,
  Deeper, perchance, it may be found—
And having found it, oh how fair
  Th' uncovered grace shows to the light!
The whole wide, stony waste doth wear
  For it, new beauty in our sight.
The Gold is reached! its hue we see!
  All hid in our own breasts of such,
As by some secret alchemy,
  Thrills at its first life-giving touch,
And glows with kindred sympathy!

THE CROSS.

If thou a Christian art, bound to thy lot
Shall be some Cross. It is the load all bear
Who follow Christ toward heaven. When at length,
After long bafflings, thou hast found out thine,
Seek not to loose it more. Turn, and in love
Embrace it, for whatever shape it wear,
It is, in truth, thy friend. The ease it spoils,
Or the good gifts it seems to hold thee from,

Are nothing, to those blessings yet unknown,
Which in th' mysterious orderings of thy fate
Are knit with it, and it alone, for thee.

EVENTIDE.

This is the hour when, far back in old time,
Isaac, at Eve, walked forth to meditate.
Amid green fields he walked, with lowing herds
Far scattered round him. Who can tell how oft
At this same hour, through all the ages since,
Lone wanderers amid like solitude,
Have mused with holy thought as he did then?
There is an influence uttered not, but strong

That Nature doth shed forth to win men now,
And they yield to it, though discerning not
To what high teaching woos her gentle hand.
I tread not the green fields, but on the brink
Of the steep shore, beside the river's flood,
I sit me down alone. The restless winds
That ruffle this expanse by day and night,
Are all departed, leaving the wide plain
Smooth as a mirror. In the distant west
The sun goes down; his brightest rays are gone,
And clouds that late received him, passing through,
With gorgeous colors, faded once again,
Deepen in purple as he far descends.
But, scattered through the heaven outspread above,
Lone, loftier clouds still catch the crimson tints
And cast their shadows in the tide below.
Look at the scene! That purple wall of cloud,
Built 'gainst the west, inverted now we see.
Those forests, that the opposite shore do fringe,

Are doubled, each tree spreading dark beneath;
While over all the glassy surface spread,
At intervals, the red clouds of the sky
Are pictured, yet more soft, deep—deep below!
The heavens grow dark—between those crimson spots
The answ'ring waters blacken, and the stars,
Just shown above, I see relighted there.
Oh beautiful! Can I no further reach?
Often thus far I've come and looked upon
The works spread round me, till they filled my soul,
And every faculty it doth contain,
With the acknowledgment of nature's charms,
But ever with them seems to come a bar—
A barrier to some farther sought advance.
They are most beautiful, yet they impart
No other speech to me, no larger being!
I pause upon the brink of the beyond,
And am not satisfied! My soul still thirsts
For something more. As far as they extend

'Tis well, and fills me with a deep delight;
Yet that which whets the spirit's appetite
Not satisfies its hunger! Ah, my soul,
Be thou content to learn what this would teach.
Nature is not thy God. It holdeth not
The final good, yet coming from God's hand
Would win thee to him. It is not prepared
To take the place which He alone can fill,
Upon the fall'n heart's vacant throne of love;
Nor are the charms so thick about thee spread
That whereon thou must feed! Thy Saviour's Cross
Is thy true portion. Rest nor pleasure here,
From any visible nor from unseen things,
Can be thy chief employment, clothed in clay;
But in the intervals between the toils
And stern tasks of thine upward pilgrimage,
Nature, with all the visible, beauteous acts
And works of the Creator, are to help
As glimpses—springs of water by the way,

That lead toward the great river, tasting faint
Of that pure Stream of Life! When then, beguiled
With these beginnings of that final draught,
Thou treadest now, no more, the pilgrim's path,
But seekest here to linger and draw forth
The soul's full cup of bliss—the stream so sweet
For its true purpose, stagnates to thy taste!
Nature, however woo'd or looked upon,
Can yield but that for which she hath been sent.
I have, then, too much sought to fill my mouth
With fruits plucked from her—in those shaded bowers
Meant to refresh, I have made my abode;
And so I find, by wisdom's ordered rule,
Which may not bend for me, that her delights,
Rather than adding more unto their store,
Have lost of what was at the first their bulk.

THE RIVULET.*

Deep in a wood I walked, where bending boughs
Close-grouped, denied an entrance to the eye,
When suddenly, soft on my ear arose
The sound of waters flowing somewhere nigh.

Thirsting amid the noonday's sultry heat,
And wearied with my journey, steep and long,
From the lone path I turned my willing feet
To seek whence came this voice of forest song.

* 1 Cor. x. 4.

Through depths of withered leaves, with rustling tread,
I forced my way in utter solitude,
Still by the murmuring of the waters led,
That louder, as I came, swelled through the wood:

Till presently, a noisy Rivulet
There tumbling over mossy stones, I found;
Above it, high in air, tall branches met,
And wild flowers bloomed beside it, on the ground.

I stooped and from its gushing current drew
Refreshment, that cooled all my toilworn frame;
Then, lingering not its secret charms to view,
Turned and resought the path from whence I came.

But still the hidden stream flowed by my way
For many a mile, and till the evening hour;
Still heard I, through the wood, its soft wild lay;
Still felt I that cool draught's refreshing power.

In the sweet sound there was companionship,
It fell upon my heart like words of cheer;
And well I knew, again my thirsty lip
Might drink, if need be, from its current clear.

That night, when lying down, my journey o'er,
Ere I its toils in slumber could forget,
By fancy led, revisiting once more
The lonely wood, the murmuring rivulet;

Methought, how like a richer stream hath been
The brook that followed by my side to-day:
So doth Christ's Presence, through life's changing scene,
Comfort the heaven-bound pilgrim on his way.

When earth, for him, lies clothed with verdure bright,
When trouble strips it to a wilderness;
In Joy's glad morning, or in Sorrow's night,
That Presence doth attend him but to bless.

And still the Christian, as he journeys on,
Feeling, whate'er his lot, sin's inward power,
Doth listen to its voice, and lean upon
The help it giveth in the trying hour.

Often he turneth from the world aside,
Seeking fresh vigor for the conflict there;
He drinketh from that life-renewing tide,
While borne aloft in praise, or bowed in prayer.

Sweet Stream! by thee I long have nurtured been,
A loving hand me by thy course has led,
Yet do I thirst! When shall I enter in
With ransomed soul, blood-bought from Death and Sin,
Where I may drink deep, at the Fountain Head!

SAVED BY GRACE.

'Tis vain, the endeavor to make pure
Our hearts before God's sight,
They cannot e'en the search endure,
By Reason's partial light.

For though with man, pride may forbid
We should our faults confide,
Who feels not in his bosom hid
That many yet abide?

But when God's Spirit hath us taught
His perfect Law, we feel
The sin that tinges but the thought,
The guilt words ne'er reveal.

What seemed a trivial stain before,
In nature's estimate,
Now spreading, blots the whole life o'er,
And mars all our estate.

With this new light doth knowledge come
That succor is on high;
That but One can avert man's doom,
His nature purify:

But not embraced quite by the heart,
These new truths to it given,
We mostly, still, would weave a part
Of our own dress for heaven.

We strive, but sin still cleaves to us;
We weep o'er faults confessed,
And cry: Ah, ne'er polluted thus,
Shall I attain that Rest!

Until oft raised and fall'n again,
Oft baffled to and fro,
We find our strength is spent in vain,
And that it must be so.

That, whether in Christ's fold or not,
If from his faith we fall,
And seek by works to cleanse sin's spot,
Forgetting He doth all—

If once again toward our own cross
From His, we turn our eyes,
Or in the least would join our loss
With His sole sacrifice—

If, though our lips belief profess
That grace can save alone,
Our hearts, by doubtings and distress,
That simple trust disown—

If not through love, but slavish fear
We serve him, and with dread
Strive to be blameless, lest he pour
His curses on our head,

We shall not walk in peace, but go,
Like those who Christ ne'er knew,
In bondage to a cruel foe,
Life's weary journey through.

For Conscience, when the soul by her
Seeks to be justified,
With scorpion lash and bloody spur
Runneth our path beside.

Ere this day's set task is begun,
To-morrow's farther bound
Is marked; her toils are never done,
Her rest is never found.

Great burdens on the soul she lays,
And bids it scale heaven's height;
Waking, sin's crushing load dismays,
And fears of wrath by night.

But Grace does not afflict us so,
It sets the prisoner free;
It bids the poor, bound captive go,
With a son's liberty.

For Jesus knows how weak our frame,
But of the dust we are;
By pity moved, for us he came,
To make our souls his care.

And our release by Him is won,
  Seek not to win it o'er;
Would'st thou a second time atone,
  Or to his blood add more?

"Fear not," He saith, "on me to stay
  Thy soul for Death's dark hour:
Fear not th' approaching Judgment Day,
  The Law's condemning power;

"Not to the Law, but unto Me
  Thou then shalt answer make;
I, who have borne sin's penalty,
  And suffered for thy sake."

THE RELEASE.

I THOUGHT, as by my friend's sick couch I stood,
How like the way is made we all must tread,
Feeble and suffering, downward to the tomb!
If we could take this from our portion off,
Disease and the accompaniments of death,
And go up, lifted as Elijah was,
Unto that Rest now reached alone through them,
How many who do shrink from year to year,

And tremble o'er the last unfettering step,
Would crowd life's farther threshold! It is well
Some slight, imagined bar should hold us back,
Or clamors for deliverance would arise
Where prayers for patience should our tongues employ,
E'en before heaven, to choose our Father's will.

CLOUD SHADOWS.

On yonder far, blue mountain's side, I see
Dark moving spots. So vast their bulk they touch
At once the summit and the base; they change
Their uncouth shapes, and slowly creep along.
What are they? They are shadows of the clouds
Floating between the mountain and the sun;
White summer clouds, within an azure sky.
More swift, across the plain, I see them come

Unchecked from field to field; each one in turn
Obscuring for a moment. Where the wheat
Close reaped for many an acre, stands in shocks,
They cast a fleeting shade; the meadow green
Is darkened next; soon a whole waving wood
Looks richer while they lodge amid its top.
Now o'er me, in the wind-traversed space,
I see the forms from whence these shadows fall.
No dimness clothes them there; illumined bright,
Filled with the beams they will not let pass through,
They add new beauty to the realms of air.

So, Christian, from true blessings framed in heaven,
Thine earthly seeming sorrows ever fall.
Couldst thou look up, as I do, to the height
From whence these shadows come, thou wouldst behold,
For every woe some greater mercy hid,
Enough to make thee welcome the brief shade
Betokening its presence. And in this

Faith hath its office on our daily walk:
When we can see the hour of gloom approach,
Or feel the burden, or the stripes laid on,
But not discern a blessing in the cause,
Faith tells us, though we see it not, 'tis there!

THE NAMELESS GRAVES.

HERE are two graves with flowers overgrown,
No monument doth tell who lies beneath,
Or how the swift-winged years have come and flown
Since they were laid here by the hand of death.

Yet was there once a time when smooth and green
This sod unbroken lay in the cool shade;
Renewed each Spring its grassy dress was seen,
Till autumn frosts, returning, made it fade.

This virgin soil, that ne'er upheaved before,
To dust received those who of dust were born,
Then closed again to be disturbed no more
Till they shall rend it on the Judgment Morn.

I thither wandering by a toilsome way,
To view this quiet resting-place am brought,
And lingering here as fades the summer's day,
Find 'mid its quiet beauties food for thought.

Though still and lonely now, I do not doubt
There has another scene been witnessed here,
When sorrow, from the stricken heart, flowed out,
And where these flowers spring, fell the bitter tear.

But now, perchance, the stricken heart is gone
That yearned for those who lie beneath this spot;
Perchance, of all who tread the earth, not one
Remembereth their image or their lot!

And this is but the common fate of all,
The world forgets us though we loved it well,
And the few kindred hearts that weep our fall,
Soon following us, are fallen where we fell.

It is not then upon your earthly state,
Ye nameless slumb'rers who lie here at rest,
That lingering thus I muse and meditate,
As fades the day along the golden west!

Though ye had many lovers and few foes,
Though shining honors clustered round your brow,
Though ye were poor and suffered all the woes
Of keenest want—what doth it matter now?

Earth's sorrows and her highest joys forgot,
The things ye sought in vain and those ye won—
That pitied and that envied in your lot,
Are now alike all gone, forever gone!

Not to the fleeting things of time, which die
As the spent clay moans out its latest breath,
Thought turns with silent, retrospective eye,
But to the soul, that still lives, after death.

Were ye of spirits broken, contrite, meek,
Forsaking all things for a Saviour's love?
Did ye neglect a portion here, and seek
One garnered up at His right hand, above?

Glad thought! It may be that the path of prayer
Across life's waste these mould'ring feet have trod,
That, cheered by faith, through all this night of care
With joyful steps they hasten'd home to God!

Sweet are their slumbers by the earth o'erspread,
Peaceful their rest beneath the grass-grown heap;
Blest is their couch, yea, blest this narrow bed
To those who here, till Jesus' coming, sleep.

May it be mine to know their safe repose,
Where'er I fall, whate'er my mortal state;
Sin shall cease here—here all pursuing foes,
As Heavenward, I enter Death's dark gate.

If such my happy lot, I do not fear
A dwelling with the worms. This crumbling dust
Is but the seed; then shall it reappear
New, at the resurrection of the Just!

LOOKING WITHIN.

Am I unlike all men beside,
In that polluted heart I hide
From others' sight, deep in my breast?
Are they driven by the evil thought,
And to the verge of action brought,
Of guilty action, ne'er confessed?

I, who each day, from year to year,
Do offer up the Christian's prayer,
And seek for guidance from God's Word;
Still from my closet often go,
Like passions with the fiends below,
To have within my bosom stirred!

Some scornful look, some slight offence,
Some wooing, tempting bait of sense,
My graces from me quickly win;
And then not Duty, so well known,
But God's restraining hand alone,
Doth hold me back from open sin.

If others be like me; if all
Are thus corrupt and prone to fall,
How can it move my wonder more
To view triumphant wickedness,
To see Sin spreading power possess,
Till it prevails the whole world o'er?

So am I brought to comprehend
How we on heavenly aid depend,
And that without free, blood-bought Grace,
No soul could hold to virtue here,
Or without trembling dread appear
At last before the Judge's face.

SPRING.

Even while I write she comes! As by the side
Of the smooth river watching, oft I see
The breeze approach with ripples and white crests,
So we discern her presence hast'ning up
From the far south. Or shall I her compare
To one whose task it is to beautify?
Like a bride decked for her near nuptial hour,
The betrothed earth she circles round with flowers.

Or painter shall I call her, laying on
Bright colors, mingling every tint with skill?
She cometh like a princess, with her train
Of singing birds attended. Where the fields
Lay brown and barren 'neath long Winter's reign
She calls the tender blade; gardens and grounds
For summer pleasures, claiming from the waste,
And the sweet narrow path lost in the wood
'Midst autumn leaves, tracing out plain again.
The grave she spreadeth with fresh covering;
Ever she finds some new one, where before
'Twas smooth when she went by. She passeth not
The lowly resting-place, nor yet the bed
Of him who here was great. Alike o'er both
She soweth thick, emblems of life renewed.

Ah, when shall she find mine? On what return
Will it lie near her path? Beside what stream,
Or 'neath what spreading tree shall it be made?

ow soon, as I write now of those just gone,
all others write of me? Ponder, my heart!
ke not life's shortened thread but to bind up
esy's fading flowers. Although thy steps
told not in thine ear, nor the days left
nfolded to thy sight, yet as he goes
ho hast'neth by the seaside to embark,
nearest thou thy change. Hast thou been washed
Blood? and doth the sin-stained soul put on
nother's Righteousness? Then shall this hour
nature's glad awakening faintly show
at blest revival to a Better Life
hich shall be thine, when from the wintry tomb
ou comest forth, as a Spring-nurtured plant,
bloom and bear sweet fruits forevermore
dst fields that know no blight nor frost, in Heaven.

AUGUST.

How fair the forest walk! I tread
  Amid low bushes, dense and green,
While tall boughs woven overhead
  Let in noon's burning rays between,
Checkering the earth beneath my feet,
Where light and shadow, mingling, meet
  Richer than on a palace floor.

* * * *

Why cease the birds? The Thrush's note,
From where she hides in yonder tree,
Filling with plaints her snowy throat,
Is all the song that comes to me.
But cricket shrill and grasshopper
With noisy clamor answer her,
And locusts with their sounding cry;
For August now is almost gone,
Her latest hours are drawing nigh,
The young from downy nests have flown,
The parent's summer toils are done.
Who taught you now to hush your song,
And, silently, your fledglings bring
While, for far climes, ye plume the wing?
So lead me, O Thou who dost guide
Them in their flight till it is passed,
That I, at the Good Shepherd's side,
With all the flock who there shall hide,
May reach the Heavenly Fold at last!

Within this forest opening
That peeps out from the mountain's side,
I stand and look far o'er the plain,
Shorn of its robe of golden grain.
Some spots by deepest tints of brown
The ploughman's earliest labors own,
Who doth the yielding sod prepare
Its dress of Winter-wheat to wear.
From yonder distant barn I hear
The flail resounding; yet the sun
Shines on a landscape rich and green,
Where not a faded leaf is seen—
Nature's decline is scarce begun;
Only the morning's stirring breath
Comes fresher, while I rest beneath
This verdant roof and court its shade.
And as the sunset hour draws on
A purple haze descends upon
The distant hills, and fading day
Hastens with fleeter step away.

We thank Thee, who hast caused the field
Once more its bounteous stores to yield;
  In garners safe the husbandman
Hath laid a world's provision by,
  Which not his toiling arm hath won,
But Thou, for our need, didst supply.

NATURE.

Thou lookest on some fragment of the Past,
Some carved Sarcophagus which hid hath lain,
Covered up, unknown for a thousand years;
And the dim fancies that around it throng,
Fictions upsummoned but from thine own brain,
Clothe it with interest. But when, in thy search
Through all its parts, the closer scrutiny
Reveals some strange inscription that doth tell

Who laid there in his ancient sleep of death,
Giving the name and lineage of a king—
How doth that interest deepen into awe!
So once I walked beside a murmuring brook
In early youth (I know the stream yet well,
And where far through a wooded glen it winds),
Feeling the stirrings of a strange delight
Such as in other ears I might not speak,
Tho' conscious of the source from whence it sprang.
Yet as I followed on that brook's green brink,
Noting its falls and eddies—leaping now
Across its bosom to the firmer side—
Now sitting down beneath some spreading tree,
Gazing and listening to its gentle song,
There was imparted to my childish soul
A sense of beauty and a real joy.
These were responses from that answering chord
Placed in my bosom—early openings
Of that perception which notes nature's charms!

But as I grew, and this instinctive sense
Deepened with years, Grace the full truth revealed
That all these charms were fashioned by the hand
Of One who loved me; and that Nature stood
Robed as she was, not to embody forth
Some unknown God, some dim unformed belief,
That we, kept back from any near approach,
Should darkly worship her, or Him in her;
But wrought out by God's hand veiled from my sight,
The visible witness of his Power and Love.
As thou wouldst walk amid mementos spread
From one beloved, yet hidden from thine eyes,
So walk I amid nature! and if now,
After a circling pilgrimage of years,
My steps were led back to that early stream,
Not by the mind's maturer growth alone,
But by this new interpretation given,
Would all its beauties show to me more fair.

ALL GOD'S WORKS DECLARE HIM.

THERE's not a flower upon the plain
That drinks the dew or summer's rain,
But, as it spreads its tints abroad,
Doth speak the goodness of our God.

On every leaf and springing blade
That rustles through the forest glade,
Some trace or vestige fair is shown
By which His power divine is known.

The warblings in the lone woods heard,
The deep tones by the tempest stirred,
In voice of wrath or tenderness,
Alike, His will supreme express.

The sombre night doth Him proclaim,
It utters forth His dreadful name;
Morn doth those gloomy shades dispel,
And of triumphant mercy tell.

The spreading skies of spotless blue
Bear witness, and the thick clouds too;
Earth doth her testimony bring
In wintry robes or dress of spring.

All nature's works, O Lord, combine
T' exalt thy Name, for they are thine;
May we, with hearts taught in thy ways,
From deeper source bring loftier praise!

THE VIEW ACROSS THE RIVER.

When morning fills the eastern skies,
Or noon to heaven's blue height doth rise,
Or when, at sunset, thickly fall
Those golden beams that brighten all,
Then gazing this deep river o'er
To yonder far-off, blooming shore,
I think upon the Promised Land—
How I shall one day pass the flood,
And e'en as on that shore I stood,
So on its blissful borders stand.

Then on those very fields of green
Methinks wing'd, angel forms are seen,
  Hasting with smiles to welcome me;
They draw me dripping from the tide,
Each strikes the bright harp by his side,
  They shout at my delivery!

Ah! yonder shores of wood and field
Cannot in truth such blessings yield,
  Nor there have heavenly ones their birth:
'Tis vain the thought! Though I were there,
I still this evil heart would bear
  And meet but dwellers on the earth.
Yet thus I love midst visible things,
That busy hope which to me brings
  Such heavenly sights as like them seem;
For there is such a better land,
And I upon its shores shall stand,
  Ris'n from a darker, deeper stream.

Receiving there, in Christ, my part,
Sin's latest snare shall flee my heart,
That here with temptings doth oppress;
The Foe who here doth oft alarm
Shall lose all power to do me harm,
And God my upward path shall bless.
Toil shall not there mix with my song,
Nor shall I, when my task is done,
Find motives mingled so therein,
That e'en my work most perfect, must
Become a thing of simple trust,
Lest it be counted wholly sin.

O glorious day! O wished for morn,
Still with rich hues my skies adorn,
But burn not forth too dazzling bright;
Lest I faint here 'midst griefs and pains,
Nor patient bear what yet remains,
With Heaven so opened to my sight!

SILENT INFLUENCES.

The sunshine silent falls upon the bud,
No voice doth answer, but the secret cell
Within, enlargeth, and the embryo hid
Swells and perfects itself to the full flower.
The writer sits in some lone room apart,
He utters there no word, his arm toils not,
He holds his pen, and as an idler seems;
Yet from that quietude do thoughts come forth

That, as with wings, do fly from heart to heart,
O'er the wide world, with moving influence.

It is not by the sound nor show without
We judge of the result. He who doth all,
Curbing this fleeting world and all the stars,
Doeth it silently. Canst thou stand forth
Far in the forest, when each early shoot
Peeps from the rugged bark, and every blade
From the moist earth springs up in its own place—
Canst thou hear then a whisp'ring 'mong the leaves,
New waked to life? Or canst thou from on high
Discern the voice that calls them? From the world
That marks the limit of an angel's flight
To this our lower world; from this again
To that most distant in the opposite space,
An unseen silent influence pervades,
And in harmonious order holds all things.

CHRIST'S HELP AND ALL-SUFFICIENCY.

Easy 'twere to work my soul's undoing,
  Did not Jesus guard Life's narrow way;
Day by day my wasted strength renewing,
  Helping his own precepts to obey.

Or the sore temptation he removeth,
  When he sees me weak and prone to fall;
In my bare escape his love he proveth,
  As when strong I triumph over all.

Not to me the glory then remaineth,
When some secret purpose to fulfil,
Still He nerves my arm until it gaineth
Victories surpassing mine own skill.

Nor should it depress, if with His favor
To the lowliest station I am led;
Or while there my weak, sincere endeavor,
Thwarted is and naught accomplished.

All mankind are willing to adore him
While his service yields but this world's gain;
Give me rather grace to walk before him,
Faithful still, though suffering loss and pain.

Surely such the Saviour hath selected
On their hearts His image to impress;
Shall I murmur—wish myself rejected
From their number whom He most doth bless?

If I robbed were of each earthly treasure,
And meanwhile my soul no increase knew;
In such loss beholding His displeasure,
I might utter lamentations due.

But though outwardly abased, forsaken,
While within, Christ's presence I can find,
Looking to Him, with a trust unshaken,
Not one want shall move my steadfast mind.

MORNING.

This is the dawning time. The early light
That comes before the sun, doth but dilute
And faintly tinge the darkness. I awake
And hear no sound. Then on the stony street
The wagon rumbles, lonely, from afar,
Freighted with fruits from distant smiling fields.
Soon passeth by the quick and sounding tread
Of the head-workman, early at his post.

The beams grow bright, and with soft call arouse
Thousands from sweet rest! Now they are let in
At chamber windows. Upright on the bed,
Propped amid pillows, stayed and wrapped about,
The baby babbling sits, while from their tasks
Those who around put on their day's attire,
Oft run to chirrup and clap hands with him!

But from the sick man's room th' unwelcome beams
Are driven back, and one imprisoned ray
Is given entrance. He has found, at length,
The wished-for slumber. Heavily sounds his breath;
Th' array of vials in disorder round,
May not be righted now. A form steals in
On tiptoe, casting first an anxious glance
Upon the sleeper—motions then to her,
Who watcheth by him to her turn of rest.
Tread softly! breathe not loud, lest he awake!
Is he a Christian, he for whom Death fights?

O what a mighty foe, and what small force
We muster 'gainst him in the battling hour!
A feeble woman, armed with mixtures, draughts,
Drops and dilutions that the well man scorns;
Is this all we can bring? Must the loved one,
The tender mother or the only child,
The strong man or the monarch from his throne,
Come thus to die, not compassed round with power,
But in a darkened chamber, all alone?
Fit me, then, for this hour! If earthly might,
Or riches, or the power of intellect,
Can cope not with it, wrap my soul about
With what this King of Terrors cannot pierce.
Give me the shield of Faith, wherewith to quench
His fiery darts. To right and left gird on
Armor of Righteousness. Cover my head
With th' helmet of Salvation. Plant my feet
Firmly on Gospel ground. Within my hand
Bestow that Sword which fights not with the flesh,

But which is spiritual, for I here
Would rather win, than on all fields beside!

DUSK.

Thou scarce canst see by this dim light
  Yonder where mingled shadows fall,
Touching almost the ceiling's height,
  A nail driven part way in the wall.
In years long gone—I count them not—
My sister hung upon that spot
The cage that held her singing bird;
Trilling all day, its notes were heard,

Seeming thanksgivings for her care,
Sending sweet music everywhere.
Now, were she sitting by my side
  Still, when the recollection came,
'Twere one that might a time abide;
  Much since hath changed, much is the same,
The smile might greet it or the tear,
But—that sweet spirit is not here!

Is it not strange that at this hour,
  When all her past crowds to my breast,
One lone remembrance comes with power
  Rising undimmed above the rest?
That of an unkind word by me
Which she once wept at, silently.
Why doth it thus come? 'Twas forgiven,
  And blotted, as I trust, above,
From the recording book of heaven.
  Were there no words of tender love

That, as I muse to-night alone,
Might bring me joy from those years gone?

Ah, not on such an errand sent
  Speeds thither the unwelcome thought,
For me a better gift is meant,
  To me instruction it hath brought.
The present shall become the past,
  Even as the former years have fled,
May I not, lingering till the last,
  Count those still round me with the dead?
The word to-day, told in the ear,
  That makes some wounded heart to burn,
May, when that heart shall not be here,
  Back to my bosom, barbed, return.

The lost cannot our sorrow know,
  Nor at our call attend us more,
E'en though we would but speak our woe,
  And pardon for our faults implore.

But to the living we may prove,
By daily charities sincere,
The Christian's true and lasting love:
So, should Death's dreaded messenger
First unto them his summons bear,
And from our sight their forms remove,
Not self-reproach, with torturing sting,
Shall noiseless, fleet-winged Memory bring,
But comfort, e'en amid our tears,
Shall rise with thoughts of bygone years.

MIDNIGHT.

Flickering within its socket, weak,
  My candle scarce doth hold its flame;
It sinketh now—now doth it seek,
  Running swift down the wick again,
To draw new life and sustenance
As it was wont to draw it thence.
Slow it returns, the store is done,
Now but a glimmer 'tis become—
'Tis fainter, fainter—it is gone!

But the spark left is not quite fled,
It sends forth wreaths of smoke o'erhead,
  It varieth like the flame before—
  Plays the same game to hope once more
Till it too darkens, and is dead.

I marvel not that men have seen,
  Ever in this slight incident,
Pictured that moment when hath been
  A summons to the spirit sent—
So doth the body hoard its breath,
And yield unwillingly to death;
  But looking, let us not forget
That all of languor imaged there
  Is of the flesh—unfolding, yet,
The soul doth but its wrappings wear,
  Which, loosened, falling off at length,
Leave it, for glory or despair,
  Indued with new, sustaining strength.

Methinks, at such a time and place
  Did heavenly heralds, as of old,
Meet and speak with us, face to face,
  I might celestial converse hold.
He who, by darkness compassed round,
Slumb'ring upon the desert ground,
  Saw angels in th' illumined air
  Ascending and descending there,
While One above more glorious stood,
Lay not in deeper solitude.
  But this may not be; day nor night
  Shall yet unveil Him to my sight,
  Who, from all flesh, hath hid in Light.

Yet exiled here, far from the skies,
  Groping midst this world's gloom about—
My lamp obscured by mists that rise,
  Not of the Truth, but mine own doubt,
I've said, To see Him with mine eyes,
  O that some path might find Him out!

So foolish am I?—Hath His word
  Then ceased? or is His providence
With daily utterance no more heard?
  Turn I from these to grosser sense?
Should some pure Seraph, even now,
  In answer to my call appear,
Bright from the throne where such do bow—
  Doth not a still voice, yet more near
Whisper all that I then might hear?
Thus might he speak: Though mine it were
  To minister, I could impart
To thee no more abounding light
  Than that now shed upon thine heart.
Wandering long since in rayless night
  Thy Saviour found thee. On a way
He placed thy feet that upward led,
  Yet told thee dark clouds round it lay;
Thy soul rejoiced, was comforted
  Through darkness even, to hope for day.

Now, dost thou murmur, faint and pine
Because those promised clouds are thine?
  Think'st thou such mists can blind His eye,
  Or, faithless, He hath passed thee by?
Canst thou not trust? Be still, O man,
  And when 'midst shadows thou must wait,
Know they are part of love's great plan—
  Remember now thy first estate!

Weary not of thine earthly days—
  Cut off from them, how couldst thou rear
An offering to thy Maker's praise?
  Nor let thine earthly task appear
Beneath thee; and in secret cry,
  All things are brief and fleeting here—
My soul doth loathe them, let me die!
  Did he who first unearthed the gem
  That decks some royal diadem,
Or dug the gold that clasps it now
Above a monarch's lofty brow,

Know then, toward what high aim he wrought,
Or see that fair Crown in his thought?
So is thy task to thee unknown;
But when it shall be done at last,
These fleshly garments from thee cast,
And earth's vast house of toil o'erthrown,
Its full end shall to thee be shown;
Each dark day's purpose shalt thou see
In some joy of Eternity.
Nor wouldst thou then, that one sad care
Of all so grievous now to bear,
Had been removed or made more light,
For plainly opened to thy sight
Shall be the mystic union
Which joins, when sorrows here are done,
Earth's woes and Heaven's bliss, in one.

THE BEAUTIFYING POWER.

The moss that clings about the prostrate trunk,
Clothing it, as in regal velvet dress,
While it decays where once it towering stood,
Turns the dead, loathsome ruin to a thing
That feeds life and becomes an ornament.
The gloomy forest is adorned by it
Rather than marred. So where the barren rock
Lifts its forbidding form against the side

Of some steep hill, the bulwark of its height,
Not long it bare remains. The Columbine
In clusters here and there on every ledge,
Up to the very summit, finds a home,
And decks its dusky face with scarlet flowers.
There is a Power pervading all the earth
That quick transmuteth homeliest things to fair,
And makes of necessary change and wreck
New beauty. If the mind unprejudiced
Might contemplate the works that power displays,
It would adore the Intellect Supreme
Who is their author, for the evidence
They are themselves of such a Sovereign Head.
But what man fain would imitate, is left
Without an author, by man's unbelief!
If he who counterfeits the landscape well
Grows famous, by his hand's mere copying skill,
What shall be said of His exhaustless thought
Who planned the mountains; laid the vales between;

Clothed them with verdure; watered them with streams?
His was the first design of every flower;
He mingled all their hues. The landscape green,
And desert waste, were robed as He saw fit.
He led the river to the mountain's verge
And poured it forth, the sounding cataract!

THE SNOW-STORM.

The feathery flakes are dancing in the air;
How subtle must that influence be which draws
Each one down from its flight! So slight they seem,
The viewless winds might be their dwelling-place
Where they should still abide. Within my glance
Millions now slow descend; they whirl—turn back,
Climb toward the skies again—far from their course
Are driven ere they reluctant touch the earth;

Yet o'er this field the spotless covering
Rests, smoothly spread, as though some master hand
Had, after, levelled it, or counted out
The layers in each pile. From yonder cloud
O'erhanging us, the silent messengers fall,
Which thus doth waste itself and back return
Its substance to the earth, whence it was drawn.
From the deep sea—the broad and mighty river,
Or rivulets and dews, it woo'd you up,
Ye countless drops, now fettered in my sight,
Each in its crystal prison. Oh, how fair
This wintry scene! Not that it should endure,
Else would it tire the eye and bolt the doors
Of earth's most bounteous storehouse; but thus shown
'Midst nature's ever-shifting imagery,
How beautiful! Nor beautiful alone,
But 'neath these white folds, closely covered lies
The autumn's wheat, unreached by nipping winds;
So that th' untainted sheet a robe becomes—

A fitting garment—that doth nurture life.
Flung o'er the hills and 'midst the wild ravines,
It melts and gently trickles, drop by drop,
Into the secret cisterns of the springs,
Which hoard the precious store for summer's need.
He who doth shiver with the cold, and fault
The snow's thick fall to-day, shall bathe his brow
Yet in some fountain, 'neath a sultry noon,
And though he knew it not, be blessed in it!

But what is there in this our fallen world,
Which bringeth benefits, and in itself
Is harmless—that hath from its first intent
Not been diverted by our sins? The breath
That cools the sick man's cheek hastes on its way
Till it becomes the tempest, dealing death;
The dew-drop that scarce bends the pendent flower,
Once helped to drown the mountain-tops. So ye
Soft, feathery snow-flakes, gathered high above

Some sleeping hamlet, when the breath of Spring
Hath loosed your frozen grasp, come thundering down
The mountain Avalanche! Or fruitful vales,
Between high lifted peaks, ye do fill up,
Denying the soft earth to hungering mouths
And willing hands. But further toward the poles
Ye sea and land wrap in enduring bonds,
Capping the globe with ice. What clothes this field
In white—this landscape in an innocent robe
That guards the embryo root and melting pours
Refreshing drops o'er all beneath, there spreads
A stony, frigid wilderness afar,
Nursing fierce storms—sending them o'er the earth
On errands of destruction.

'Midst thy works
I dwell, O Lord! their kindly influences
Receiving, and their countless visible charms
Looking upon with joy; yet well I know
There is not one but, clothed with power by thee,

May in a moment wound me. Still I live,
Not fearful, but assured that Thy command
O'erruleth all; rejoicing in the word
That every creature worketh for his good
Who loveth thee, I wait from day to day
Their various messages; nor would I dread
That, which at last, by some such hand may come,
Calling me from this changing world below
To where no winter comes or storms e'er blow;
But where the soul, by guiltless blood made clean,
Shall Him behold, whom here it loved unseen,
And in His presence saved, life's conflict o'er,
Ne'er know of cold, nor heat, nor tempest more.

SINGLENESS OF PURPOSE.

The wild flower of the forest hangs
  Its purple head mid deepest shade,
Swift comes the bee on sounding wing
  And sips the sweets within it laid.

His weight bends down the slender stalk,
  While gathering his load he swings,
Now almost to the sod beneath,
  Now from it borne, aloft he springs!

Not long he waits, nor at each flower
He rifles, when his task is done,
Doth wait to mark its varied tints
Or count again his treasures won.

But stayed not, seeking more, he flies
O'er waving field, through wood and glen,
And when his glossy sides are full,
Home hastens to the hive again.

So while life's ever onward march,
Through checkered seasons I pursue,
May I keep uppermost in thought
The service laid on me to do.

May pleasures found on duty's path,
Like wild flowers yielding nectar sweet,
Nor woes, that spring by the same road,
Divert my steadfast going feet!

But faithful to my Saviour's cause,
And true to those with whom I share
Its labors—till the work is done,
May I my full proportion bear.

Then shall I roam through endless days
Where toil mars not the pathway blest,
Nor sin th' exulting soul betrays:
But where the soul its God obeys
And, in obedience, finds Rest.

THE PRESENT.

The Present, with its portion, though that be
Increased an hundred fold from days gone by,
Seems ill provided, and we still go poor.
What once was coveted, now being won,
Is valued not—'tis needful to be prized
That it should still lie just beyond our reach.
Poor recompense to Him who gives us all
And marks th' effect, what larger gratitude

Or quickened growth in grace. Let it not be
Thus with my heart. As one cast from the wreck
While he stands dripping on the rocky coast,
And sees his fellow's lifeless form washed in,
Feels grateful still, tho' he some wealth hath lost—
So let me feel, and gaze still at the want
That I am saved from—at the penury,
Disease, and woe, on millions round me laid,
Rather than midst so great deliverance
Repine or murmur for one good gift more!

THE TEACHER TAUGHT.

Daily, to my froward little child,
Am I pointing out the better way,
Teaching to be humble, patient, mild,
Ever for a heart renewed to pray.

But how often, even while I speak,
Conscience echoes back the warning word;
Do I for myself these graces seek?
Is my ceaseless prayer, ascending, heard?

In the very faults that I reprove,
Angrily, perchance, with look severe,
Mingling harsh rebuke with little love,
Mine own errors, imaged forth, appear.

And if they the infant breast defile,
Odious in their least confirmed degree,
How much more the measure of their guile
Shows matured and fully ripe in me!

Oh, I am unworthy to fulfil
This exalted trust, to me assigned;
Who am I to curb the rebel will?
Who to reillume the darkened mind?

Yet I may not lay this trust aside,
Nor refuse these souls who claim my care;
Though more guilty, their guilt I must chide;
Hurt myself, their wounds I must repair.

But how should it calm each angry thought,
And lend meekness to parental sway,
That, while these to me for stripes are brought,
I deserve to suffer more than they!

SEVERITY AND GENTLENESS.

While slumber close sealed up my sight,
Methought from some far aerie's height
An Eagle touched me in his flight!
I seized the bird, and struggling tried
T' imprison him fast by my side:
Long did he furious battle wage!
Hurt, I oft struck at him in rage!
But while I wounded him the more
Deeper my bleeding side he tore,

Until at length, I, strangely moved,
Stroked his fierce head as one who loved;
When lo, he ceased—he lay at rest,
Harmless, at peace, upon my breast,
And I saw in the vision fair,
Now 'twas a Dove that nestled there!

THE BUTTERFLY.

While sings the grasshopper, and the bright sun
Pours o'er the golden grain his ripening heat,
And through green valleys hidden streamlets run
Wide parted, all in ocean's depths to meet:

Then the frail Butterfly with trembling flight,
And wavy track thro' the midsummer air,
O'er field and highway in the workman's sight
Flits like a thought unwritten, yet móst fair!

Look, where it lights upon some clover head,
  Swaying its wings, as to its own faint breath!
Now lifted up, now lowered and outspread,
  They show the tints above and underneath.

Bring hither the great artist; let him tell
  If with his pencil dipped in every hue,
He could such tiny pinion deck so well,
  Or so with beauty a winged fly indue?

Rare jewels for the brow of dust we set;
  With robes these dying forms we decorate;
Each rich adornment man hath fashioned yet,
  By contrast, telleth of his low estate.

But He whose power doth all those works prepare,
  That clothe with glory, sea and earth and sky,
Unto the least, of such grace gives a share,
  That it proclaims His Sovereign Majesty.

GOD'S GREATEST WORK.

Thy visible works, O Lord, display all forms
That matter, lifeless and inanimate,
Can shape to shadow thy perfections forth
And Power Supreme. The mountains where they rear
Their peaks, until they challenge the swift clouds;
The valleys spread beneath and in their laps
Holding the food of nations; the deep sea
Peopled by viewless myriads; the skies

With store as numberless of shining worlds;
These all proclaim Thy majesty, but all
Might in their present grandeur be outspread,
And yet tell nothing of Redeeming Love.
'Tis in thy death alone I may behold
That great Salvation it hath wrought for me!
And therefore, more than all the rest, I prize
This Thy most wondrous work. I look abroad
And feast upon that varied, rich display
Which men call Nature, but from it soon turn
Unsatisfied, to gaze upon the Cross.
For Nature's charms are fleeting, and the time,
Appointed them, makes haste to be fulfilled;
But Thy Death, in its gifts unto my soul,
And in its revelation of thy love,
Shall then but be unfolded, when these scenes
Dissolve midst flames; while I, with Heaven's glad hosts
Strike my new harp, in rapture, to the theme!

PHŒBE ANN JACOBS' COTTAGE.*

Within this little house alone
Dwelt one who to the heavens hath gone.
Of lowliest race, to bondage born,
No lofty deeds her life adorn;
She rested here at each day's close,
Here with the morn to labor rose,
Poor was she, and her dwelling poor,
I would have blushed to change with her;

* See American Tract Society's Tract No. 536.

But where on high the angels bow,
Would I might share her mansion now!

Oft have I seen her toiling nigh
Or, thoughtless, oft have passed her by
And spoken kindly, for all knew
Her blameless walk, her goodness true;
Yet did I never realize
That here dwelt one so near the skies.

The hushed and silent midnight air
From here hath borne aloft her prayer;
The dim faint dawn, the middle day,
Evening, that sweeps day's beams away,
The task yet scarce begun, or o'er,
Have seen her close this humble door,
And go within, alone, to pray.
This very room that stoops so low,
Knew joys the Palace scarce may know,

When to the waiting heart prayer brings
To banquet there, the King of kings.

It was within these narrow walls,
  At some unknown hour of the night,
Death stood, as when the soul he calls,
  Slow rising on the failing sight.
Throughout the land, an hour before,
He knocked at many a rich man's door,
And heard the cry of agony,
The prayer within: Oh, pass me by!
But when he reached this lowly cot,
The prayer was, Ah, pass by me not!
And Death himself stood rev'rently.

Tell me, my soul, now none are nigh,
And we may commune secretly,
Though thou wert offered Genius, Power,
Fame, Riches, for the dying hour,

Wouldst thou not all of them forego,
And rather want and suffering know,
If but at last, his dreaded dart
Might come so welcomed to thy heart?
Yet poverty and suffering
Cannot, themselves, such blessing bring,
Nor, without them, is it denied;
For poor for rich, for small for great,
For thee, whate'er thine earthly state,
Jesus, a willing Saviour died.

But thou must seek his follower's part,
And to his service yield thy heart,
Whatever else thou hast, or art,
  Counting for Him, but loss;
Then shalt thou know, in life and death,
Their peace who, with Him, walk by faith;
  Their joy, who bear His Cross.

THE EAGLE.

Between two mountains, o'er a river's bed,
An Eagle rose one cloudless summer's morn,
In widening circles sailing overhead,
At each majestic sweep, still upward borne.

I silent stood upon a rocky height,
That hung the water's troubled bosom o'er,
And watched him rise, till on my aching sight
His form appeared against the void no more.

Then looking down again from the far blue
Upon the river, through the empty air,
Still it was beautiful, and yet I knew
Something was wanting—it had shone more fair!

Methought, Thou art an emblem, soaring bird,
Of the true Christian pilgrim on his way;
His viewless path, his sleepless step unheard,
Tend ever upward toward the perfect day!

And as I miss thee now, and all this scene,
For thy departure, saddens in mine eyes,
So, where Christ's faithful follower hath been,
All things are losers as he seeks the skies.

THE SEA-COAST CAVE.

Under a rocky coast, the hunter, borne
In his slight skiff, a narrow opening sees,
Left by descending tides. With trembling hand,
Slowly and watchfully, he entereth in,
Stooping to the low entrance. Lo, how grand
A temple for such door! The cave ascends
To a vast height, while he sits silently
Rocking on the black billow! From his side
Up, up aloft with glittering crystals hung,

The walls do climb, till meeting o'er his head,
They cover him with shadows. Where the waves
Break gently 'gainst the rock, each blow resounds,
And he, one word of wonder uttering, hears
Unnumbered voices from th' inclosing night.
Still borne along in awe—yet grown more bold—
A distant sound salutes his ear: he floats
Past many a dripping crag—'neath arches grand,
Till, from a steep before him, waters fall.
The scene in dusky beauty is disclosed!
From the dark bowels of the earth they come,
Here poured forth through a dim way to the sea.
A snowy shaft of Stalactite stands up,
Beside the cat'ract, o'ergrown with some vine.
O Nature, how deep dost thou touch the soul,
And how calls thy mute language! As these caves
Burrow beneath man's knowledge, from the day,
So speaks that language, witnessing of God,
In the heart's depths, where even we look not!

PRAISE.

As everything in Nature, from the star
That sparkles in the zenith, to the worm
That on the earth I tread beneath my feet,
Telleth of a Creator—and as more
We do unfold its parts, it telleth more
Of that Creator's wisdom, goodness, power;
So I could wish that every thought drawn forth,
And image, from the storehouse of my mind,
Might speak thanksgiving! and as from the depths,

Deeper within that treasury it was born,
So it might higher rise in rendering praise.
Praise is the one great utterance! the song
Of all things round me! Nature in her haunts,
And man as I behold him, for the sum
Of all his acts and checkered history
Is the fulfilling of a supreme will.
Not that God moves to sin, but man intent
Upon his purpose, wealth or pleasure here,
Chooseth his way, but God appoints the end!
God's enemies do praise him, for their zeal
In guilt he turneth to his own account,
Making them strive unconsciously for good.
The wicked have been scourges in his hand
To scourge their fellows; or their stripes laid on
Have humbled saints whom pride held back from heaven.
The righteous praise Him, even when they fall,
And miss the path, in that true penitence
Which weeping doth retrace each erring step.

PRAYER.

Oh, wondrous Power, by which alone,
I, born to want and poverty,
May climb to Heaven's far courts unknown,
Yea, pass up to the very Throne,
How am I poor possessing thee?

I stand on earth, thou lift'st me hence—
I reach to those blest heights divine,
I touch their loftiest eminence,
I joys immortal pluck from thence,
And fill my bosom—they are mine!

PEACE IN TROUBLE.

Among the wonders of God's power
Is that it can bring us peace,
While the dreaded blow descends,
While the joys we cherished cease.

'Tis not that the stroke is light,
Or that we should count it small;
But the grace that with it comes
Sanctifies and sweetens all.

Yet this blessing is reserved
  Only for the smitten heart;
He alone the balm may taste
  Who hath felt the bitter smart.

Thou may'st less of sorrow know,
  It may be high heaped o'er me,
But a feast for me is spread
  That was never spread for thee.

Not that I am thus upheld,
  While thy steps are left to slide;
Mine are heavier weights of grief,
  Mine are fuller joys beside.

Why should I from trouble shrink,
  Or new woes refuse to bear,
If they are Christ's messengers,
  Charged with blessings rich and rare?

Not beneath unclouded skies,
  Not midst smooth prosperity,
Doth it please our risen Lord
  We his form most plain should see.

But when storm and tempest blow,
  Then he calls us by our name;
While beneath us rolls the flood,
  While around us roars the flame.

AWAKING AT NIGHT.

I woke far in the silent night,
  The taper burned upon the floor;
Methought: Thus may return my sight
  When I shall wake to sleep no more.

Suppose One at my bedside rose,
  And said, Thy life has passed away;
Morn shall for thee no light disclose,
  Nor usher in returning day.

Just as thou wast, in all the same,
Yet in thy sleep insensibly,
Swiftly this night thy spirit came
From time into Eternity.

Oh! what deep anguish would it cost
To have, for years of earthly care,
Nothing, in place of all then lost,
No treasure laid up for me there;
No Friend, no Advocate, alone
I to appear before the Throne!

Take it to heart, my perilled soul,
Nor these as idle fancies deem,
That like the midnight mists uproll
Dissolved with morning's earliest beam.

Soon shalt thou come into that state,
And fears now dim, obscured, afar,

There all disclosèd thee await,
Brought nearer than thy joys now are.

Trust not in life. How few of all
The millions that have passed away
Received, when they looked for, the call,
Or met prepared the fatal day!

UNBELIEF.

I HAVE been tempted to repine, and doubt
Ever comes nearly yoked with discontent;
For if I murmur and reproach my lot,
Though I refuse to speak the open charge,
Yet he who shapes that lot goes not unblamed.
Can I esteem this life bestowed on me,
As but an evil gift, and look upon
The pain that sometimes wounds it, as a thing

That more than weighs down all its part of good—
Can I thus judge, and daily from His hand
Receive my portion, honoring my God?
Beware, my soul! thou hast an enemy
Who comes not undisguised with open front,
But who, while thou complainest doth steal in,
And where from Heaven hath been implanted Faith,
Nurtures the hidden seeds of unbelief.

Oh what a magic glass the Tempter hath,
By which our sorrows do as worlds appear,
Our blessings but as scattered grains of sand!
Destroy his wiles, O Father, and give light
To see the kind apportionings of thy hand.
Let me, who do as Truth adore thy ways,
Ne'er seek th' unfolding of those ways from him
Who is to Truth the foe. All troubles here
Help me to bear as burdens that are light
When weighed against my true and just desert.

And O, more than the rest, arm me against
That dark allurement which would lead me forth,
Finite, into the infinite abyss
Of secret purposes, known but to Thee,
Lest I should, there, demand things unrevealed
And all too high. As but a little child
Make me in simple and unquestioning faith.
Rob me of whate'er seems to be a gift
(But is, in truth, my poverty and want)
If it would bare what thou still keepest veiled,
Or for my blindness, lessen filial love.

WHO HATH PRESERVED ME.

I know that had I tempted been
At many a point along my way,
I should have fallen from the faith,
Or sinned beneath the open day
Of gospel truth and gospel light,
And changed their glorious noon to night.

It was not that I shunned the ill,
Or held in check the bad desire;
I relished sin, and rather sought
To rouse anew its slumbering fire;
But thou didst bind my hands in toil,
Or wily adversaries foil.

So, when I look upon the past,
And trace the steps already trod,
I find my footprints on the brink
Where by the dread abyss I stood,
And know it was against my will
They were held from advancing still.

As he who holds his helpless child
When danger or the foe alarms,
Now guiding his unwary feet,
Now bearing him within his arms,
So God hath held my hand thus far
Through all sin's life-long, truceless war.

But this was no more than his love
  At first did for me, when it gave
To a rebellious spirit, lost,
  Repentance, pardon, faith to save,
Which not my erring heart e'er sought,
But his far-reaching mercy brought.

Brought me at first, and turned my feet,
  From where they wandered far astray,
Into the narrow Path of Life;
  Then, led them up that Heavenward way,
And yet shall lead, until I rise,
On Mercy's wings, borne to the skies.

THE SECRET SIN.

Can I in secret cherish now this Sin,
And hope to reap not, some time, punishment?
What though I it confess not to myself,
And utter forth anew each morn a prayer
Against the tempter, when as eve comes on
I welcome him again with smiling look?
Is there uncertainty or blinding doubt
Between me and my fault? Can I not tell
Whether 'tis mine or laid on me unknown?

Ah yes, the turning of my ear away
From the loud condemnation of my heart,
Drowns not that inward sense which needs no tongue
To tell me I am guilty! And if guilt
I thus permit to spread with clinging root,
I know with blood it must be plucked at length.
The terms whereon we hold our inward peace
Have not been changed, nor is the sleepless eye
That marks each taker of Christ's covenant,
Dimmed that it cannot see. His chastening arm
Still doth exist and hoard its dreaded strength,
When nothing hurts, and we, secure, sin on,
As in the moment when descends its blow!
What then is needed? That these wav'rings cease
Between indulgence and infirm regret:
That I let conscience cry into my ear,
How but to taste of what we dare not drink,
Partakes in the true nature of the deed
Of the full crime, and shares its penalty.

For look, my soul, how thou art hemmed within
Cherished possessions! These are all a mark
For the correcting shaft, or may become
As instruments of torture. Are there not
Some bound to thee by such close union
They seem to be not of a separate life,
But part of self, and self's most tender part?
Let danger touch them—or but breathe upon,
How dost thou tremble! Pleasures that have led
Thee upon doubtful paths for many years,
Holding thee chained by their returning spell,
Do in that moment lose their prolonged power,
Their fascinations turned to loathed defects,
Thou hatest them—because linked with the thought
Of retribution now poured on the head
Of one whose wounds bleed chiefly in thyself!
Yet may such pay the forfeit, if the love
Thou hast for Him who bids thee put away
All known sin for His sake, can move thee not.

WITHOUT AND WITH THE CROSS.

While, at my ease, I trod the Christian course,
With many good gifts clustering round my lot,
Prone to forget them, or their heavenly source,
That peace I should have known, I tasted not.

Some cares were left that I would have removed,
Some weaknesses that I would have made strong,
Some things in doubt remained, I would have proved—
Much was there in my portion that seemed wrong;

So that although I daily offered up
My thanks to the Great Giver, and confessed
I had a full, an overflowing cup,
Yet did I go, in truth, as one unblessed.

Thus was it till upon a time there came
A cloud o'er my horizon. I discerned
A threatened grief afar, which but to name
My brightest morn to gloomy midnight turned.

Oh, then, I saw those small adversities,
Which had from greater good withdrawn mine eyes,
Were as the spots the blinded gazer sees,
Upon the sun at noonday in the skies!

I cried, in earnest prayer, but this remove,
And discontent shall spoil my peace no more;
Restore me as I was: my life shall prove
That gratitude now felt, withheld before.

I had the boon I asked. The sorrow feared
Nor nearer drew. The cloud that rose in sight
Dissolved again, and all serene appeared,
As ere it first came forth, and yet more bright.

And loud were my thanksgivings, but ere long
The memory of this great deliverance,
Dimmed by degrees and lapsing back to wrong,
My heart repined and murmurs came from thence.

When this I noted, while my conscious sin
Brought fresh disquietude, methought I heard
A voice thus speak: The Peace that reigns within
By outward things nor lost is, nor conferred.

Its life is separate, and rests alone
Upon an unseen, heavenly supply.
To him who goes beneath the Cross 'tis known;
There it will bloom when all earth's gifts are gone;
Elsewhere, amid their full possession, die!

THE MIRROR.

THERE 's not a fault that doth offend
Or cause me grief, in foe or friend,
But when I lay my own heart bare
I find its likeness imaged there.

Suspicion's charge unkindly spoken,
Friendship's sweet trust, in secret broken,
Though hid from others, oft hath been
Mine own acknowledged bosom sin.
10

What love professed with selfish aim,
What wrath that burns with cruel flame,
Can I condemn to punishment
And show my own hands free from taint?

There is no evil thought confined,
A guest in the polluted mind,
But when I search my memory o'er
Its footsteps have been there before.

So it doth happen, that whene'er
In others, guilty stains appear,
The charge I would prefer, returns,
And o'er my brow its impress burns.

THE DYING HOUR.

Often I think of it. Before the time
It comes to test my labors—filled with light,
Which sheds its own pure lustre o'er my works—
Or sometimes wrapt in shadows. Oh, at night,
The lonely, silent night, I have awaked,
And thoughts of death have fallen over me
Like horror of deep darkness! All my toils,
Those finished, those yet shaping in my hands,

Then rose and stood as stern accusers forth,
Urging my guilt—yea, even my holy things
Did threaten me with Hell. And yet was this
My folly! I saw the deformity
Of my stained life, but looked not on the robe
That should with beauty cover it—an awe
It was of God, unmingled with that love
Which casts out fear.

But sometimes as the Sun
Thro' the dim chamber shoots a golden beam,
So 'midst the doubts that darken oft my way
In glorious fulness comes the knowledge down
Of my relation—of that filial tie
By which in truth I walk. Oh, then is mine
What freedom! With what liberty I go!
How gloomy fears, like mountains piled before,
Melt to the plain! Like one surprised with strength
Who long hath halt been, as an hart I leap.

But soon, by fault of mine, becomes too great
This liberty—I lessen watchfulness.
And so once more, with wisdom temp'ring love,
God letteth pass a cloud.

How changeful then
And dull, some voice will say, must be such life!
Where is its privilege or peculiar peace?
'Tis not the searching eye can find it out—
The heart must harbor it! God hath no path
Laid down and measured, as man lays the rule
By which he leads his own: each differeth
In varied want, and needs a separate way.
The bitter drops and sweet, are meted out,
Mingled for every soul. But here is it
Wherein all have their joy—th' assurance given
That He hath chosen us, and that he brings
Each, conqueror at last, through joy and woe—
Yea, and through sin—to his eternal Rest.

HERE AND HEREAFTER.

HERE, our lots differ: some have store of wealth,
Some do inherit power, some rich gifts,
That in the circuits vast and flight of thought,
Exalt them o'er their fellows. But all go
Poor, stripped, alike into the other world!
Possessions, talents, power, no value have
In the celestial estimate. One price
And costly Gem alone, goes current there.

He who in intellect ne'er reached our height,
Who in his lot was lodged with our contempt,
Who did group in his body all defects,
If but possessed of This, shall show more fair
And have more honor, than he lacking it
Who reigned here, and at death bestowed a throne!

CONFLICT.

When looking on my heart,
  Its guilt I would confess
More than the ready pen can write,
  Or fluent tongue express.

I feel how true that word
  Once uttered with offence;
O'er all things it deceitful is,
  Nor knoweth innocence!

Wearied I grow and mourn
  The Conflict sore beneath,
And cry: Who shall release me from
  The body of this death?

The burden of my life
  Seems more than I can bear,
Its evil things to outnumber
  The good, the true, the fair.

Toward that swift coming hour
  Which nature most doth shun,
I look and think its steppings slow,
  Wishing my journey done.

Yet rather than thus wish,
  Though death brings me no fear,
Should I not seek for grace to live
  And do my duty here?

'Tis but a coward's deed,
As we approach the steep,
To sigh for smoother steps beyond
Or fold the arms in sleep.

But this is not the part
These hands are called to do;
Why should he gird his armor on
Who fears the field to view?

With help sufficient now
And triumph at the end,
Can I not for my Master's cause
One fleeting hour contend?

If from his victor's throne
Christ hath the promise given,
That I shall vanquish all my foes
And reign with him in heaven—

'Twas to make strong my heart
That so his word was passed,
And shall I now refuse to strive
Because assured at last?

Is this my gratitude
When thus his love appears?
Then had I served him best, shut up
Midst gloomy doubts and fears.

O pilgrim Zionward,
Who faints life's path to tread,
Thou art unworthy of thy place!
Thou livest, yet art dead!

If the awed, trembling slave
Hastes at his master's call,
How much more should the son beloved
Who is an heir to all?

Shall creatures of an hour
  Their part ordained fulfil,
While I, born for immortal joys,
 Remain an idler, still?

Oh no, he last should turn
  And from the conflict fly,
Who holds a pledge in God's own word
  Of final victory.

The soul that in this war
  Can claim no heavenly Friend,
May well recoil before the foe,
 And tremble for the end.

But he who knows his trust
  And sees his triumph sure,
Should with unfaltering step press on
 And be a warrior.

I will from sloth arise
And weak discouragement;
They fetters are to bind my arms,
By one who hates me, sent.

Nor is the rash desire
To offer up my life
A fruit of grace, while 'tis my part
To mingle in its strife.

Christ's friends and foes around,
Where'er I stand, look on;
They courage take, or are dismayed,
At each day lost or won.

Trust then, my soul, His power
Who thee release can give;
When He calls, meet prepared death's hour;
Till then, thy cross rejoicing bear
And to His glory live.

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH.

We are hemmed in by possibilities
Of so great evil, that without a trust
In One whose sway doth overreach them all,
Our minds would be companioned but with fears.
My body, hale to-day, may soon become
The lodgment of some most abhorred disease.
My intellect, now in its many parts
Laid like the atoms of transparent glass,

Each in its place, but one in harmony,
May by some shock be so disquieted
That, order and all just proportion gone,
Darkness shall fill the room and place of light.
There is not one possession of my joy
But as it is the more beloved as such,
May so be changed into a heavier woe!
The currents that bring joy and sorrow down
Are viewless, unknown, and beyond our reach.
How could we live and bear the consciousness
That it is thus, untroubled and at peace,
If we held not this firm persuasion safe,
That, not by chance, these currents ebb and flow,
But as poured forth or held back by the hand
Of One whose wisdom compasseth our fate—
Who better knows our need? From day to day,
Save but for this, shut in the dark I go,
With treasures both to forfeit and to gain;
Yet never fearful save when letting slip

This sweet belief, I trust in mine own strength.
Then am I tost and sore disquieted,
Seeing how great my hazard, and how weak
I am to combat, o'errule or defend!

OMNISCIENCE.

How different is God's view from ours
We dimly scan a few dark hours,
But before Him, as one page, lie
The Past and all Futurity!
We wait th' event that shall befall,
He doth each in its order call,
And ere the first had summed up all!

To us, what hath been, is forgot,
What shall be, yet unknown, is not;
To Him all equidistant, clear,
The age long gone, the moment here—
Throughout Eternity's vast round
Naught new nor old is, lost nor found!

PERFECTION OF ALL GOD'S WORKS.

Tell me what hand invisible it is
That through the far-off depths of forests wild,
Scatters the seeds of fragrant, tinted flowers—
So that they spring 'midst the untrodden shade
As in a garden, though no eye doth see?
Who is it from the circling firmament
Draweth the clouds at evening toward the west,
And drapes and groups them round the setting sun?

If bare and unadorned use alone
Hath merit in God's sight, then why are these?
Or doth the rugged and deep-buried ore,
Because of the strong particles it yields,
More speak and magnify the Maker's praise
Than the frail rose that useless o'er it blooms?
Beware! His creatures all have use, and serve
Somewhere within the scale and compass vast
Of His designs, the purpose of their being.

THE SUMMER COTTAGE IN WINTER.

This is the place where, when glad Spring
Doth from the deep earth blossoms bring,
I come, with those I love, to dwell.
Winter, Spring's brother, robed in snow,
Not as some say, her envious foe,
She greeteth here, and bids farewell;
While round the stream her warblers sing,

And this white cottage by its side.
Lo, what a change! Then, open wide
Doors, windows, tempt the gentle air;
Now, stripping field and forest bare,
The winds, as for its ruin sent,
Do shake this trembling tenement.

I might be sad. The faithless thought
To me by less is often brought,
But I will rather think of when,
Midst calmer hours, 'neath heavens serene,
Sweet Summer will be here again,
Waving her leafy robes of green.
Soon shall break forth that milder day,
Soon 'neath the shade my child shall play,
Watching the robin twine his nest;
Or, grouped all on the river's brink,
We'll stand in presence of the west,
While down its steep the sun doth sink.

For so the full and bounteous scope
Of the good promise gone before,
That seed-time, harvest, autumn's store,
Revolving shall fail never more,
Giveth me liberty to hope!
Only this one remembrance
Driveth these glad thoughts blushing hence;
It is that for long seasons past,
Given me in this place of good,
I at the Giver's feet have cast
But moments brief of gratitude.

DAILY FALLS.

When Satan tempts our feet to stray
Beyond that strait and narrow way
  Where pilgrims walk below,
If his allurements we refuse
And still that lowly pathway choose,
  How joyfully we go!

But when we listen to his voice,
As led to falter in our choice
By his false argument,
How soon our weakness is espied,
How swift he hurries us aside,
Though scarce we yield consent.

Then, though we may not wander far
From that path where our joys still are,
But thither soon return;
How find we from our soul's sweet trust
The strength, the peace, the gladness lost
While we are left to mourn!

One step, one bad indulged desire,
May smothered embers set on fire,
Or let the wild flood in;
The Tempter now must be withstood,
We must now quickly stem the flood
Or be o'erwhelmed by sin.

And when by long contention won,
Or brief sharp strife, the fight is done,
With all our sin confest,
What deep discouragement, what pain
That we have been ensnared again,
Disturb and wound our breast.

It is a time of doubts and fears,
Of the bowed head and rising tears,
Gloom seems to cover all;
For then the Foe, baffled once more,
Cries: Thou shalt yet be given o'er
And one day wholly fall.

I know, O Lord, so proud a heart
As mine must often feel the smart,
Its true estate to know;
That to look inward and behold
Its vileness as a world unfold,
Doth make me humbly go.

Yet I beseech thee, only when
I heed the Tempter's voice again,
  Leave me to be o'erthrown;
And in thy mercy, soon restore
My feet to the safe path once more
  When I my guilt am shown.

THE WEIGHT.

Christ's followers, though forgiven, go not yet
Wholly unburdened. Each one hath his load
That holds him back; or as he casts this off
Another clings with firmer hold. The weight,
If not without, is spiritual and unseen.
If not an arm of flesh doth drag thee down,
One viewless, grasps thy shoulder day by day.
Always there is temptation. 'Tis the growth

Spontaneous of the ground on which we tread;
It doth pervade the atmosphere we breathe;
And still the fall'n heart, as it comes, makes room.
Yet is there even 'neath its tainted touch
A patience to attain; not that which bids
It welcome to the breast, or ever rests
From strife against it, but which doth ward off
Discouragement, and 'gainst our lot complaint.
Infirmity is loss, and yet by it
The Christian hath his gain. Cure my disease,
And my Physician will return no more.

There is an envious captive in my mind,
Or shall I call it ruler? Surely not
The highest throne it fills there, yet its seat
Is not unclothed of power. If I flee,
I bear it with me—silent if I sit,
Yet gives it me not rest. No strength of mine
Can cast it out; and He on whom I call,

Permitting still its presence, only saith,
My grace sufficeth for thee. Give me, Lord,
That grace, and while thy purpose holds me here,
Teach me how with corruption to abide,
Nor loving it, nor murmuring—but with hope
So much more ardent, longing to be free.

THE PILGRIM'S SONG.

When cherished wishes thwarted are,
And for an even way,
Rough places that distress our feet,
Their rugged tracts display;

If we will lean upon the arm,
Compassionate and strong,
Though it be rough, our upward path
Shall seem nor steep nor long.

For Christ's supporting grace can change
The most distasteful thing,
And with the burden that we bear,
More of refreshment bring.

'Tis not beneath serenest skies,
That richest harvests grow,
But where the sun oft robes in clouds,
And tempests sometimes blow.

Long ranged I o'er the flowery plain
Of fair prosperity,
Unreached by sorrow, but at heart
No blessing came to me.

Again I bore those very griefs
That had been dreaded most,
And lo, the peace was hid with them
Which, hurt not, I had lost!

Now what are all these days and years
Through which we struggling are,
But times of sunshine and of storm
That more fruit we may bear?

Though not a leaf should be disturbed
By windy storm or rain,
Were we content, amid the field,
Unfruitful to remain?

Or though all honor, wealth and ease
Do circle round our lot,
What are they, when the heart computes,
If peace come with them not?

Oh! burdened heart, no more, then, strive
To escape thy weight of care,
But rather seek the aiding grace
That makes it joy to bear.

GRIEF AT A MOTHER'S LOSS.

Why should I weep? were her allotted years
  Cut off while life exulted in its morn?
Did she go down to death 'midst doubts and fears,
  Reluctant toward a Bar of Judgment borne?

No! till life's evening reached those years—their store
  Was as the full shock when the harvest 's done,
And for a swift release she thirsted more
  Than doth the servant for the setting sun.

Why, then, do I still weep? Oh, not for her
These flowing tears above her slumbers fall;
To break such sweet repose unkindness were,
Though she would rise, my lips should breathe no call.

She bore the heat and burden of the day,
I would not now disturb its following rest,
For blood-washed robes give back her weight of clay—
A thorny pillow for a Saviour's breast:

But this is why I mourn: yea, from the deep
Of a bowed soul, here o'er her grave alone;
Because the recollection will not sleep—
I did not love her as I should have done.

EVER NEAR FALLING.

When sometimes roused up from their sleep,
Or broken from their captive's chain,
My passions do new revels keep,
Reigning as 'twere within again;
When at such times a viewless hand
Leads me to some still spot aside,
And lifts the veil—amazed I stand,
That such dread tenants may abide

Still in a heart that loveth God,
The chosen place of his abode!

And could I mine own madness tame,
Or quench the self-destroying flame,
If none now to my succor came?
Ah, no! let others blindly boast
Of some power in themselves to trust;
But as for me, since that first day
When, moved by grace, I turned toward heaven,
Each briefest footstep of the way
Was made in strength by Jesus given,
Strength, that whate'er its cost may be,
Was given costless unto me.

DELAY OF CHRISTIAN EFFORT.

Striving in coward listlessness
  Each good work still to shun—
How can a Father's sanction bless
  Our labors ne'er begun?

Go boldly up—each hind'rance meet,
  Assail that nearest by;
When Duty calls, to bear defeat
  Is better than to fly!

How know'st thou but th' occasion rare
This very hour supplies?
A victim struggles in the snare,
A brother, captive lies.

He who the search unwearied keeps
With fervent, zealous mind,
May rescue some; but he who sleeps
Surely no souls shall find.

Time ne'er on earth will fold its wings,
Onward thy steps are pressed,
Slothful and diligent it brings
Where both alike must rest.

If it be sweet, when day is past,
Though not increased thy store,
To think, not to th' endeavor lost,
Its fruitless moments were,

How sweeter, far, will be at length,
As wanes life's setting sun,
The thought, To Christ was given its strength,
Though naught but Heaven be won.

AUTHORSHIP.

It is a thing of weightiest account
To write for those who shall come after us.
The spoken word is but an uttered sound,
It moves a ripple in the air and dies;
But that writ down—transmitted as a gift
From thee to generations yet unborn,
Shall go on, ever planting the same seed
And rearing fruit, through Time! Though unto thee

In thine unhappy dwelling after death,
Souls shall be sent, having chos'n by thy word
Till thou wouldst stop the stream—'twill be too late!
Engraved once on the world's recording book,
The lesson thou hast left there, must endure,
Be 't good or evil. And though thou shouldst come
After, into that safe and Blood-washed fold
Where not thy first defects, nor foemen's shafts
Shall ever wound thee—yet, if by those lines
Written before, not now to be effaced,
Others do lose the path that thou hast found,
How marred thy blest conclusion! But if drawn
Heavenward by thy wooings, they are led
Through coming ages to thy bright abode,
Then seems thine own salvation but a part—
But one gem of thy gath'ring—as one gift
'Midst offerings large to Heaven's treasury.

THE WORLD AND OUR LABORS.

He who fills a lofty place,
Though he climbed there to do good,
If one spot his robe deface
Shows it to the world abroad.

So the man, who to some work
Of mercy would devote his days,
If frailties 'mid his virtues lurk,
May gain, perchance, more blame than praise.

And some, it may be, who in heart
Are true, and long with earnest will
To act, take not the laborer's part
Because they feel their frailties still.

And truly, bitterness he reaps
Who sowing zeal, the world calls it,
For some sin o'er which he too weeps,
The cloaking of the hypocrite!

Yet is it just thus to desert
For our small loss the world's great cause?
Willing to toil but bear no hurt,
Serve we our King for man's applause?

No, nor doth censure me defraud,
Though battling in my place I be;
The good I do belongs to God,
My faults alone belong to me.

And why should I so keenly feel
What foes may even falsely say?
Am I not for sins darker still
Mine own accuser day by day?

My Master but fulfils my word;
I tell him, for His sake alone,
Not mine own gain, I wield the sword
And praise Him for my victories won!

'Tis well. In my infirmity,
Not in my strength shall swell my song—
Mine own need shall my glory be,
For so, in Christ, am I made strong!

Only, O Lord, thou near me keep,
In Thee may I my succor find,
Nor let me from man's scoffing reap
New pride, but lowliness of mind.

Then, low or lofty be my place,
My earthly portion gain or loss,
I will with patience run my race,
And count it joy to bear Thy Cross.

A SPRING IN THE WOODS.

Not far I walked, when from the road
A path wound through the deep, wild wood;
I turned on it, and following,
Came to a hidden, crystal Spring.
As close beside its grassy brink,
I prostrate kneeling bent to drink,
'Neath its smooth surface, imaged there,
I saw tall boughs, as in the air—

While through their openings, farther down
Spots of the deep blue heaven shone;
Then, when I broke the falling light,
Lifting my hand to shade my sight,
These pictures from the surface fled,
  And but a little way below
The white sand, boiling, gleamed instead,
  Pure, spotless, like a bed of snow.
I noted to the cool wet side,
Welled up the placid, limpid tide,
Then overflowed and stole away,
Where thicker foliage dimmed the day;
The rivulet not heard nor seen,
But marked by growth of deeper green,
With here and there, amid the gloom,
A wild rose in its desert bloom.

How long it was I cannot tell,
Ere I, here, in deep slumber fell—

When my closed eyes beheld a sight,
Unveiled not to them by the light.
Methought the trees about me drew
Apart, and the long vista through,
I looked on the descending sun
As oft before then I had done;
Only the clouds and sea of gold
Now like a gateway did unfold,
Mighty and glorious to behold!
Within those gates, undimmed and clear,
'Midst Heaven's unclouded atmosphere,
I saw afar a shining band
Look out toward our earthly land—
I saw them on Heav'n's threshold stand!
Soon upward borne, as it had been
With glad news, from this world of sin,
An Angel to them entered in.

Then quick that bright host gathered round,
I heard unnumbered voices sound,
"The dead hath life! The lost is found!"
At this I saw the Heavens no more;
The earth closed round me as before.
Then, while I lay there wondering,
Methought, beside that hidden Spring,
Even with me in that lonely wood,
One of those same bright beings stood.
"Know'st thou what thou hast seen?" said he;
"Dimly," I answered, "doth dust see;
Even though I know, yet tell thou me."
"Whene'er," he said, "on swiftest wing
Angels to Heaven tidings bring,
That but one soul hath turned to God,
Joy filleth all our blest abode!"

POSTHUMOUS FAME.

To die, is but the fate decreed for all,
And, dying thus, to lose in all we have
That property which gave it worth to us.
What I do here possess, if not given up
Before that hour, must be given up at death;
And what I have which Death robs me not of,
As a renowned name—though still I keep,
Is worthless to me who have from it gone.

For though it lives and still remaineth mine,
'Tis in a stronger sense not thus, while I
Am dead though it lives, and can know it not.
Because, where'er my dwelling after death,
To this world and the things within it bound
I am as if in all I ceased to be.
Therefore I find my closely-reckoning soul
Taking the less note of its portion here,
Choosing one rather, deathless as itself,
Though here possessed not, for the life beyond.

THE END.